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THINGS THAT I REMEMBER.

MY HOME.

THE things that I am now committing to paper have been lying at rest in my memory for years, and they come out like stars at night, as I look into its deep recesses; like stars, too, they come out not in order. I will try to describe my home. A large old rectory-house, the outside covered with creeping things, literally *covered* from the ground to the roof; the ground-work ivy, over which grew roses, honeysuckle, passion-flower, clematis. A light wooden porch to the front door, a perfect arbour of creepers and sweets. A bright green, well-mown lawn in front, with a narrow border of flowers, outside which was a green wooden railing. The gardens were at the back of the house. There had once been a moat, but it had long since been almost entirely filled up; there were, however, two ponds left, which divided the flower from the kitchen gardens. These were like two tiny lakes, joined together by tiny straits, which had a pretty bridge across them, leading from one garden into the other. One of these ponds had an island in the middle of it, and it was one of our amusements to throw a ladder across the water so as to form a bridge between it and the mainland. We used to find a way by this means to the many wild-flowers which grew amongst the tangle on the island. But this was not our most favourite means of crossing the water. Our great delight was boating in brewing-tubs: we had a narrow piece of board for a seat, and battle-doors for oars, and we used to have tub-races, which were doubly delightful because they were dangerous. If any of you, my readers, would like to know the amount of danger, I request you to try for yourselves. I remember several mishaps. On one occasion, one of my sisters, who was by no means an over-adventurous one, was tempted by a young gentleman-visitor to an excursion of this kind. Not quite understanding the danger of the slightest movement from the centre of gravity, she upset the tub, which unfortunately got on her head, acting as an extinguisher:

and but for the timely assistance of her companion, the consequences might have been serious.

One of our sentimental friends used to row herself and guitar into the prettiest part of the pond, and there sing, reminding one slightly of a syren. O mothers of the present day! what say you to this? True, quite true! And yet our mother was not only a loving mother; we thought her extra careful, and very nervous. Our garden was a paradise for children and young people; full of arbours, shrubberies, long walks arched over with boughs of trees, from which hung wild hops, raspberries, and honeysuckles, and the ground of which was carpeted with moss, gemmed with bright-eyed blossoms. Never, never again shall I wander amid such sweet loveliness. For hours have I sat in such nooks, working or reading, and listening to a chorus of nightingales, which sang there all the day long, answering one another from tree to tree. There was one walk, a kind of raised green terrace, which we called the lovers' walk. It was open on one side, and not quite private; it led into another, narrower, and closed on both sides with trees and shrubs. This we called the 'engaged walk': when our lovers frequented *that*, we suspected their fate was sealed. Once I remember that the 'awful question' was being 'popped' to one of my sisters in the lovers' walk, whilst a younger one, who was rather a 'tomboy,' was seated among the boughs of a cherry-tree which overlooked the spot. Their surprise was great and not agreeable when they saw the agile young maiden jump out of the tree and run into the house, spreading the interesting news far and wide.

But for the house. It was, as I have said, old and rambling, nothing remarkable in any way excepting one room, which was said to be haunted by no less a personage than the Evil One himself. There was living in our village an old woman—she was *always* old in my eyes, and I don't remember that she ever grew older—who was quite a storehouse of tales, traditions, and anecdotes. Her ostensible occupation was needle-work of a rough and tailor-like description, but her real position in our house was that of 'story-teller.'

When any of us were ill or out of sorts, my mother used to send for this old woman: we used to call her 'Mother Gilbert.' She was the widow of an old soldier, and her favourite tale was of her own trials. Her husband, she told us, had been abroad for some years, leaving her with two daughters, one an idiot and a cripple. The old woman used to say she was 'sinny-tucked' (I think she meant that her sinews were contracted). Poor creature! I often saw her with horror and alarm. She used to lie under the table, always chewing a dirty rag. Well, one day some soldiers passed through the town where Mother Gilbert lived, and they had in charge a baggage-wagon. It was a cruel cold day, and the women and children in this vehicle looked frozen and hungry. Mother Gilbert took compassion upon them, went out and brought the poor starved creatures into her fire, fed and comforted them, and then discovered, to her never-ending grief, that they were a second wife and family of her own faithless husband, just returned from a foreign station.

She was a wonderful woman. She knew the *Arabian Nights* by heart—not the new and proper editions, by any means. Our young minds were filled with these marvellous tales. The names of the characters were certainly not quite correct, but otherwise they were faithfully told, and I don't think we understood the harm.

The old woman used to put her needles into her sleeve—it quite shone with them—and her pins into her mouth. It was a work of time to get it sufficiently emptied to admit of tale-telling. This old woman was my authority for the legend I am going to relate of the haunted room in our 'home,' and of other traditions which I shall hereafter transcribe. This room was called the 'Bachelor's Room.' It was a small, dismal-looking place, in an out-of-the-way corner. Oh, the horrors of that room! From my earliest childhood, I hated to pass it; and as to sleeping in it, I was compelled to do so for some nights by my mother, when I was nearly grown up, under the mistaken idea that it would cure me of my foolish fears. It brought on a long nervous illness, and has rooted in me a certain vague dread of dark nothingness.

Once upon a time—so Mother Gilbert's tales always began—a very wicked man dwelt in the rectory-house. It was then simply a substantial farmhouse; afterwards, it was bought and enlarged for the rectory. This said wicked man determined to raise the devil, which may be accomplished at any time, it seemed, by repeating the Lord's Prayer backwards; and by this means the desired object was attained. The devil appeared. The wicked man was seized with horrible dread, and endeavoured by every means to get rid of his terrible visitor; but all in vain. He continued to haunt the room in which the sinful deed was done until the wicked man was dead; then his visits became less frequent, but did not altogether cease until he was laid by twelve parsons reading him down! I don't remember precisely how this was effected; but I have a distinct recollection of the manner in which a certain ghost was laid who frequented a lonely spot not far from our home. Mother Gilbert told me this story also. A man died some centuries ago, and, for some unknown reason, could not rest in his grave. He constantly appeared in various places. Twelve parsons undertook to lay him: they read him into a bottle! In the first place, they drew a large circle, in the

midst of which was placed an empty bottle; the twelve parsons stationed themselves on the line composing the circle. Here they read and read, I don't know what. After a time, the ghost appeared within the circle, as, indeed, he was compelled to do by the charm. Nothing daunted, the parsons read on, lessening the circle by degrees; and after much reading, the ghost became a fly, and eventually flew into the bottle. The parsons, or one of them, corked the bottle well down, and threw it into a pond not far from the rectory. But, alas, what mistakes the wisest of us sometimes make! When they threw the bottled ghost into the water, they said: 'We commit you to lie there for a hundred years.' They ought to have said a hundred years *and odd*. He would then have remained there for ever; but, taking advantage of the omission, after a hundred years had come and gone, the fly once more became a ghost, and the ghost again became a nuisance; he confined himself, however, to the neighbourhood of the pond, which, I remember, was a dangerous and dreaded object to me, and to many that were older and should have been wiser.

There was another pond in a contrary direction, haunted by a woman who carried her head under her arm; but I do not remember to have heard why she indulged in such an abnormal practice.

What tyrants we were, and what patience poor Mother Gilbert exercised. She has been dead now many years; and her remaining daughter is an old woman, living in the alms-houses of my native village. My mother had a great many dependents. Her father and forefathers for some generations had been large slaveholders in the West Indies. Descended from an old and distinguished Scotch family, they had left Scotland for political reasons, and become very wealthy West Indians. My grandfather, however, returned to England in his youth, with many others of his family, and settled here. My mother inherited many slave-owning propensities. She loved slavery, and thought the abolition of it a most unjust and cruel proceeding, both for the slaves and their masters. That she should consider it unjust to the masters, need scarcely be wondered at, seeing that some of her own family were reduced by it from great riches to absolute penury. A cousin of hers, whose father had possessed forty thousand a year, died in a small lodging, having lived for many years upon the charity of friends.

One of my mother's dependents called herself the needle-'oman,' and so we called her. She was from Devonshire. My mother herself was born in Devonshire, also my eldest sister, and our dear old nurse; so we loved Devonshire, and we loved the old needle-'oman. I wonder whether everybody was old then, excepting ourselves; they seemed so to me. I never knew any other name for our friend. She travelled the southern counties of England with needles. We would suffer any difficulties rather than buy of any one else. She carried them in a basket that was very dirty, and smelt of brimstone. In those days, I remember that everybody and everything that came to the back-door smelt of brimstone: I fancy it came from tinder-boxes. We all bought needles. Our old nurse used to lay in a large stock, though they were very dear—six for a penny of common ones—but darners were double that price. Old 'mother' preferred a short dumpy kind, which she called twins. The needle-'oman always had her dinner, and was very warmly

welcomed. She was accompanied in her travels by a little gray terrier dog; she called it 'Rot,' meaning, I think, 'Rat.' Of course, Rot was a great favourite with us all. One day, the old lady looked very knowing, and asked us if we should like to have a dog like Rot. With joy we said, 'Yes.' Some weeks afterwards, a tiny hamper was brought. It had for a direction, 'Lady Tomkins, Rot's pup.' My mother was simply 'Mrs.' When the hamper was opened, there appeared within a little shaggy likeness of Rot. It was considered so much to resemble an old servant of ours, named Sally, that we gave it her name; and throughout her life, Sally was one of our chief favourites.

Another protégé of my mother's was a travelling fiddler. I am sure he was an old, old man; he had long, gray, waving hair, and a nice refined old face. He, too, smelt very strongly of brimstone. There was a shout of welcome through the house when he arrived; the kitchen was cleared; all the servants were summoned with clean faces and white aprons, the footman included. The fiddler sat in the chimney-corner, with a jug of beer at his side; and then the dance commenced, children and servants joining, their superiors looking on. I daresay there may have been other visitors of a like description, but I only remember these two. I don't remember when they disappeared, or how we have come to our present ideas about, and feelings towards, tramps. I suppose the new Poor Law has helped to produce the change. I only say such things were.

I should like to say here a few words about tinder-boxes. I remember tinder-boxes. I have often seen our old nurse making tinder by burning old linen rags. She coveted rags of all kinds, and kept stores of them; but linen was sacred in her eyes. I have the same feeling: I don't believe in cotton; I don't think it is nearly so good for burns, &c.—at all events, it would not make tinder, or *did* not. I can't say which.

The old woman hated darkness, and so do I; she said the devil lived in darkness, therefore she always kept a rushlight burning in a tall lantern, with holes up the sides, which made long ghastly shadows on the nursery floor. Sometimes the rushlight went out, then the tinder-box came into requisition. What a long process it was! One had time to fancy all kinds of things before the light was kindled. First, the tinder had to be adjusted quite close to the flint; then the flint struck with steel until the tinder was lighted; then the match applied to the tinder. It required a steady hand and cool nerves, quite beyond me, I am convinced. I am often afraid to light a Vesta, lest the imaginary burglar should be too quick for me.

My mother had many stationary dependents: the butcher's wife and widow for one. I can remember her as long as I can remember anything. She always came to the rectory, which was a mile from the village, on Friday evenings. The footman used to come to the drawing-room and announce her arrival: 'Mrs Saunders, mum.' 'Very well; tell her to sit down.' Half an hour would elapse; then the maid appeared: 'If you please, mum, have you forgotten Mrs Saunders?' 'No,' replies my mother (she never owned to forgetting anything); 'she can wait.' Another quarter of an hour would elapse, and my mother would get up and go to the encounter. 'Your servant, madam,' greets the butchers; and then the business of the evening

commences. First the week's order for the rectory larder—a large order always; for the house was noted for its hospitality, and groaning tables were the fashion in those days.

My father farmed a part of the glebe: the butcher bought the cattle, and paid for it with meat. My mother, too, always lent this woman money when she wanted it; so the reckoning took some time. When that matter was settled, the village news and gossip of the last week had to be retailed. My mother was a great woman in every way; large in body, larger in mind; nevertheless, knowing that knowledge is power, she listened to the good woman's recitals. This is not the way we do business with our butchers now a days; but I must own that in this case it led to an abuse; for once, when our parents were from home, and a brother was left in charge of the farm, a cow was to be sold; my brother desired the farm-servant in command to take her to market. He objected to this, and gave as a reason, that it would be sold to Mrs Saunders for a better price, 'because, you see, sir, she lives under *bondage*.' But my mother's slave-owning propensities came out strongest in her dealings with the servants; she scarcely ever thought of dismissing them. We had one woman for years, who had dreadful and frequent epileptic fits. It never struck my mother that she could rid herself of this evil, as we rid ourselves now a days of much less serious ones. In sickness, she nursed them; in sin, she bore with them; and in old age, they had an arm-chair in the chimney-corner, and a seat at the kitchen-table.

BROUGHT TO LIGHT.

CHAPTER V.—ESCAPED.

MR DUPLESSIS rode homeward through the warm May evening, slowly and musingly. He had done a good day's work, and was disposed to be satisfied with himself and all the world. It was a short three miles from Belair to Lilac Lodge, if you took the straight road through Normanford; but Mr Duplessis chose, this balmy evening, to take a longer route, that led him through unfrequented country ways, and quiet lanes, made shady by the rich foliage of overhanging trees. A genuine spick-and-span cavalier of the modern school, he would have looked far more at home in Pall Mall or the Park, than he did on those lonely Monkshire roads, where there were few signs of life, save here and there a cluster of lime-burners' hovels, or a batch of tired labourers returning from work.

Scarcely twenty months had elapsed since Mr Henri Duplessis was first seen at Normanford, but during that short space of time, he had contrived to put himself on the footing of a welcome guest at more than half the best houses in the county. The Spencelaughs had brought him with them on their return from a continental tour, and it was soon known throughout the neighbourhood that he had been instrumental in saving the baronet's life at the risk of his own. He had come to stay a month at Belair; but before the term of his visit was at an end, he had decided on taking up his residence in the neighbourhood for some time to come. The Monkshire streams were famous for

their trout; there was capital hunting in the next county, only a dozen miles away; there was no scarcity of people worth knowing, at whose tables, thanks to the baronet's introductions, he was a coveted guest; and last, though not least, perhaps, in the estimation of the Canadian, within the circle of his Monkshire acquaintance there revolved some half-dozen young ladies, all rich, and all charming—combined attractions, which act as the lamp does to the moth on the susceptible hearts of gay young bachelors (gay and young still at eight-and-thirty) of limited income and expensive tastes. But did the income of Mr Duplessis come within the meaning of such a term? Nobody about Normanford could exactly tell. All that was known respecting him was, that he was of good family—on that point we may presume that Sir Philip Spencelaugh had satisfied himself; that he had taken, furnished, for a term of three years, that elegant cottage ornée commonly known as Lilac Lodge; that his establishment comprised a couple of women-servants, a groom, and a valet; that he kept two horses, a hunter and a cob; that he was eminently good-looking; that his clothes were of the newest fashion; that he attended church regularly, and was liberal with his money for charitable purposes; and that, finally, he was declared by young and old to be the most delightful company in all Monkshire.

Mr Duplessis, in his moth-like eagerness to incinerate himself at the shrine of beauty (with riches) combined, had selected for that purpose the brightest lamp of all those which lighted up the Monkshire firmament. What his fortune had been, so far we have already seen; and so long as there remained the slightest prospect that he might ultimately succeed in his purpose, the fervency of his devotion would doubtless remain unimpaired. And in this he was not, perhaps, altogether selfish; for putting aside the fact that Miss Spencelaugh was the greatest heiress in the county, Mr Duplessis was quite capable of appreciating her goodness and beauty, and of estimating them at their full value; and, for my own part, I believe that his affection for Frederica was as deep and sincere as it was in his nature to feel for any one, or anything, except himself and his own interests. Should circumstances, however, go utterly against him at Belair, I think he was quite capable, without too much of a heartache, of turning his attentions to some other quarter, where they might, perhaps, be looked upon with more kindly eyes—say, in the direction of Miss Cumworth of Cumworth Manor; or towards the sole daughter and heiress of old Antony Tiplady, the great manufacturer of East-tingham.

Mr Duplessis coming after a time within sight of Lilac Lodge, while yet some distance away could see Antoine standing, napkin in hand, gazing earnestly up the road. It was a sign that dinner was waiting; so Mr Duplessis shook his horse's rein, and cantered up to the gate. Jock, the groom, was in attendance, and Antoine proceeded at once to serve up dinner.

Lilac Lodge was a small, low, white, two-storied building, with a broad verandah running round three sides of it, and with a stable, paddock, and servants' entrance at the back. From the verandah, a lawn of smoothest turf swept gently down, interspersed with flower-beds of various shapes and sizes, to where a sheltering hedge of laurel and holly

shut in the little precinct from the vulgar gaze. The main entrance was through an iron gate, from which a sinuous gravel-path ran up to the front of the cottage; but there was a side-wicket which was more commonly used.

Mr Duplessis ate his dinner in solitary state in his pleasant little dining-room, waited upon by the assiduous Antoine, who rarely allowed any other servant to approach his master. But then Antoine was more than a servant—he was M. Henri's foster-brother and humble friend; and another friend equally stanch, true, and devoted to his interests, the Canadian would not have found, had he sought the round world over. He was the faithful depository of all his master's secrets; he rejoiced in his successes, and sorrowed over his misfortunes, with a sincerity that had no tinge of selfishness in it. Though of the same age as his master, he looked half-a-dozen years older. He had a round, good-humoured, but somewhat sardonic visage, crowned with a mop of short, black, stubbly hair, which stuck out in every direction, and which had further burst out on his upper lip in the shape of a stiff moustache. His cheeks and chin were blue-black, from the frequent use of the razor; and his large flabby ears were ornamented with small circlets of gold. He was very supple and active, and moved about the little house with a stealthy, cat-like pit-pat which was particularly distasteful to the two English women-servants, and added not a little to the dread with which they habitually regarded him; but advancing years were bringing corpulence with them, and Antoine's mind was troubled thereby. Round his neck he wore a black ribbon over a broad turn-down collar, and always carried a large, old-fashioned silver watch, worn in an old-fashioned fob, with an old-fashioned ribbon and seals. This watch, with its appendages, was Antoine's fetish of Respectability—a word which he held in great veneration. He talked both English and French indifferently well, but the latter better than the former; and it was in the French language that he and his master generally conversed when alone. Finally, the leisure hours of M. Antoine were devoted to the manufacture and consumption of innumerable cigarettes of a mild nature, and to the perusal of French newspapers of ancient date.

As soon as Mr Duplessis had finished his dinner, he lounged out into the verandah, where the attentive Antoine had already placed an easy-chair, and a small table with wine and cigars. It was a clear starlit evening, cool and refreshing after the hot day.

'Sit!' said Mr Duplessis with a wave of his hand, as he proceeded to light a cheroot; and Antoine, in obedience to his master's wish, seated himself some distance away on the edge of the verandah, which went down by two steps into the garden.

'Smoke!' said Mr Duplessis; and Antoine manufactured and lit a cigarette. The two smoked in silence for a few minutes, and then Mr Duplessis spoke.

'Thou must write to Clotilde to-night, my child,' he said; 'I promised her that thou shouldst do so. The girl is breaking her heart at thy neglect.'

'Yes, Monsieur Henri, I will write, if you wish me to do so,' replied Antoine with a grimace. 'Ah, bah! what a fool the girl is! She knows I care

nothing for her; why, then, cannot she let me alone, and try to forget me?'—

'But, Antoine, thou must try to love her.'

'Love her, my faith! She has the temper of a tiger-cat. She would put a knife into me before we had been six months married.'

'I tell thee, pig that thou art, that thou must make love to her. She is useful to me, and I cannot afford to spare her just yet. As to marrying her, or not, afterwards, that is thy business.'

'It shall be as you wish, Monsieur Henri. I will write to her to-night, and tell her that I adore her, that I am her slave for evermore. But there is a little English *mees*, a miller's daughter, whom'—

'Silence, babbler!' said Mr Duplessis. 'What are thy miserable love-affairs to me. Listen, while I speak to thee of something far more important.'

'Yes, Monsieur Henri; I attend.'

'Before six months are over, I shall be married to the richest and most beautiful young lady in all Monkshire.'

'Ah, Monsieur Henri, but that is indeed good news!' exclaimed the emotional Antoine, as he flung away the end of his cigarette, and rushing up to his master, seized him by the hand, and kissed it several times with fervour. 'It is news that makes glad the heart of foolish Antoine. When Monsieur began to grow melancholy, and to lose faith in his planet, did I not cry: "Courage! The day of good-fortune will come at last." And now it has come; but Monsieur, when he becomes a great rich milord, will not forget his poor, faithful Antoine!'

'Never, Antoine Gaudin, while I live, shall thy fortunes be dissevered from mine. Whether rich or poor, we will sink or swim together. But I am no rich milord yet, nor ever may be one, perhaps; for, as the English have it: "There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip."'

'Ah, no, Monsieur Henri; I will not believe that. You will marry the rich and beautiful Mademoiselle, and live happily ever afterwards.'

'I hope thy prophecy may come true, Antoine,' answered the Canadian with a laugh.—'If I could but forget the past,' he resumed more seriously; 'if I could but think of it as an ugly dream, instead of the wretched reality it is, how happy I could be!'

'It is only a dream, Monsieur Henri,' replied Antoine. 'It never can be anything more than a dream now. But when Monsieur is married, he will be rich; and money is the seal of silence, and Van Goost is as secret as the grave.'

'Yes, Antoine, if this marriage ever does take place, there is much in my past life that I might well strive to forget. I shall reform, my child; I shall become a model country gentleman; I shall preserve my game, and convict poachers; I shall subscribe to the Monkshire hounds, and study agriculture scientifically; I shall give largely to the different charities, and never spend above one month out of the twelve away from my estate.'

'Oh, Monsieur Henri, but consider how *triste* it will be to live ever among these damp fields! One can enjoy life in Paris; one can even contrive to exist in London; but in the country here, one might as well be a cabbage, for anything there is to see or do.'

'Stupid! dost thou think that when I am married I will lead this miserable sort of life? Thou shalt see, my friend, what thou shalt see; but

should thy days be wanting in excitement and variety, why, marry Clotilde, and, by the garters of Nebuchadnezzar, thou wilt never complain of being dull again!'

Antoine shook his head solemnly, and lit a fresh cigarette.

'Thou hast seen the world of men and women, Antoine,' said his master after a pause; 'thou art somewhat of a judge of beauty. What is thy opinion of Miss Spencelough?'

'Oh, the beautiful Mademoiselle!' exclaimed Antoine with animation, as he drew his shoulders up to his ears, and placed the tips of his fingers over the region of his heart. 'How truly charming she is! What eyes! fire stolen from Olympus. What lips! sweeter than Hebe's own. What swimming grace and majesty of movement! Juno's self come down among mortals. What hair!'

'Cease thy heathenish catalogue!' exclaimed Mr Duplessis impatiently. 'She is beautiful—that is enough. And she is as good as she is beautiful. When in her presence, I can't help feeling what a pitiful vagabond—what a mean, sorry rascal, I am. Can it be possible that she will ever stretch forth a lily hand to lift such a one as me from the nether pit of his own black nature? Ah, no, no; it is not possible!'

Antoine was alarmed; he began to fear for his master's sanity, for the Canadian spoke with an intensity of feeling quite uncommon with him; and then, was it not monstrous for any reasonable being to depreciate himself in that ridiculous way? Antoine crossed over to where his master was sitting, and stooping over him, stroked him gently on the back, as he might have done a sick child. 'Ah, Monsieur Henri,' he said, 'such words frighten me. Do not say them again, I pray of you. Your stomach is out of order; to-night you must take two pills before you go to bed. Mademoiselle is very beautiful, without doubt, but neither too beautiful nor too good to become the wife of my dear master!'

'Thou art an excellent fellow, Antoine,' said Mr Duplessis sadly, as he rose and began to pace the verandah—but these things are beyond thy comprehension. I love this girl, he went on—'yes, love her for herself alone, as I never thought this selfish heart could love any one; and, by Heavens, when she is all my own, I will do my best to make her happy! I will teach her to love me as I love her; I will forget the past; and walking through life with her pure presence by my side, I will strive to'—

Mr Duplessis ceased abruptly. There was the sound of a footstep on the gravel outside the garden gate. The nimble Antoine disappeared silently among the evergreens; but before he could reach the gate, Mr Duplessis heard the well-known hail of the country postman, and presently Antoine reappeared with a letter in his hand.

'A pretty time of the night to be receiving letters!' exclaimed the Canadian.

'A break-down on the railway, Monsieur Henri; hence the delay,' explained Antoine.—'From Montreal,' he added in a whisper, as he handed the epistle to his master.

Mr Duplessis muttered a malediction below his breath; all his finer feelings had been put to flight by the inopportune arrival of the postman; he was his cynical calculating self again, such as Antoine always remembered him to have been. He waited with what patience he could command till

Antoine had lighted the lamp and closed the shutters; and even then he dallied awhile with the letter before opening it, examining the seal and the postmark, and the curious crabbed writing of the direction. When he did open it, it did not take him long to read; but when he had spelt it through to the last syllable, he seemed for a moment or two as though he could not take in the full import of its contents: so he read it over a second time; and when he had made sure that his eyes had not deceived him, he flung the letter across the table, and turning on Antoine with a face from which all colour had fled, he said in a hoarse whisper: 'Read!' and then passed quickly out into the solitude of the garden.

Antoine picked up the letter, and read as follows:

MONTREAL, May 2.

Marie has escaped. I am on her track, and hope to find her either to-day or to-morrow. No time to say more. Will write you full particulars by the next mail.

Antoine having mastered the contents, spread the letter out on the table, and stood with his hands in his pockets, staring at it in blank dismay.

'Poor Monsieur Henri! what a terrible blow for him!' he muttered to himself. 'But, bah! why do I frighten myself? She is no match for Van Goost, and without doubt he has coaxed her back again long before this.'

Mr Duplessis coming in next moment from the garden, Antoine repeated to his master the assurance he had found so comforting to himself.

'It must be so, Monsieur Henri,' he volubly added, as Mr Duplessis shook his head in dissent. 'You know well how crafty and fearless is that Herr Van Goost. Yes, my faith! as bold as a thousand lions, and as crafty as the good Gentleman in Black. He is not a man whom Antoine Gaudin would like to have in pursuit of him; and *La Chatte Rouge* herself will find that it would have been better to stop quietly where she was, rather than exasperate him by a vain attempt to get out of his clutches.'

'It's like my cursed luck,' said Mr Duplessis bitterly, reverting to idiomatic English, 'to be bowled out in this style, just at the moment that fortune seemed to be shining her brightest on me!'

'Ah, Monsieur Henri, do not lose courage, I pray you!' exclaimed Antoine pathetically. 'You have no occasion to fear anything. Grant that *La Chatte Rouge* has escaped—grant even that Van Goost fails to find her. What then? She does not even know whether you are living in Europe or America; much less, that you are snugly hidden away, like a dormouse, in this quiet English retreat, as utterly inaccessible to any search of hers as if you were locked up with the man in the moon. As far as she is concerned, you are dead and buried.'

'Thou dost not know her as well as I do, Antoine, else thou wouldst not speak so confidently. In craftiness and duplicity, Van Goost himself is as a child compared with her. The news that cursed letter has brought me hangs like a millstone round my neck, and will do so till the next mail shall bring me further tidings—either good or bad; for to know the worst would be less intolerable than this suspense.'

'But look you, Monsieur Henri, even supposing *La Chatte* were to discover that we reside in this damp paradise—and by a miracle only could she become possessed of such information—why, even in that case, I do not think she would come near us, or let us know where she herself might be. Would she not rather say to herself: "Let him go his way, and I will go mine; and let us meet no more on earth?" Say, Monsieur, would it not be so?'

'Do not delude thyself with such an idea, my poor Antoine. She would beg her way barefoot for a thousand miles to wherever I might be, rather than miss the opportunity of blighting me with her hateful presence. But if she does come, let her beware. Let her not try to step between me and the golden apple that is ready to drop into my hand; for I tell thee, Antoine, that I will sweep her from my path at every risk, even if she or I should perish in the attempt!'

'Those are bright brave words,' said Antoine with a meaning smile; and as he spoke, he drew a long ugly-looking knife from its sheath, hidden away below his vest, and plucking a hair out of his moustache, he held it up to the light for a moment, and then deftly severed it with the blade.

'Put that villainous-looking thing out of sight,' said Mr Duplessis with a shudder. 'I feel a devil tugging at my heart when I look at it.'

'Tis but a pretty plaything, Monsieur Henri, which I always keep by me,' said Antoine with an evil smile; 'a toy, a trifle; but such as it is, it is always at my master's service—always.'

CHAPTER VI.—TACTICS AT BELAIR.

When Frederica Spencelaugh promised her uncle that she would give Mr Duplessis an opportunity of pleading his suit in person, she did not see the full danger of the concession she was making; nor was she, indeed, just then in a mood to care for anything beyond the one bitter fact, that she was deserted by the man she loved. As days and weeks passed on, the first sharp agony of her wound began to wear itself away, leaving in its stead a dull aching pain; and, whether sleeping or waking, the constant sense of some great and irreparable loss. Then, too, for the first time, she learned the meaning of the word 'nerves.' She grew morbid and melancholy, and would sit alone for hours, brooding, ever brooding; and when the ghostly solitude of her own thoughts became utterly unbearable, she would order *Zuleika* to be saddled, and would gallop far away over the breezy downs, or by the lonely shore, in a vain search for her old joyous self, only to return home weary and dispirited, sick of the glaring sunshine, and the rude ocean breezes, in which there was no sympathy with the dark misery gnawing at her heart. But to the world, Frederica was the same fearless proud-spirited creature she had ever been—clear-eyed and heart-whole; and except that her head drooped a little wearily now and then, and that her colourless cheek had a slightly worn look, such as had never been there before, there was nothing to tell of the struggle within.

Not many days were suffered to elapse before the rash promise she had made was recalled to Frederica's mind; and although she would have given much to revoke it, yet seeing how impossible it was for her to do so, she was far too straight-

forward and fearless to shrink from the consequences of what she had done; but she soon gave Mr Duplessis to understand, and that without saying a word on the subject, that the advantages which he would gain from her promise would be trifling indeed; and had not the Canadian been a man of exemplary patience, he would probably have been disgusted by the coolness of his reception, and have 'cried off' before many weeks were over. But Henri Duplessis was not easily balked when he had set his heart on anything.

His object after Sir Philip had told him, with garrulous eagerness, that Miss Spencelaugh had promised 'to try to like him a little,' had been to seek an interview with Frederica, and with all the warmth and passion, real and simulated, which he could summon for the occasion, to lay himself, metaphorically, at her feet, and, if possible, to wring from her a further promise of one day becoming his wife. But when he saw, one time after another, how persistently Frederica refused to give him the desired opportunity; how, by no scheming, would she allow herself to be left alone with him for a minute; and when at last it dawned on his mind that the promise she had given had been given entirely out of deference to her uncle's wishes, and not in the least degree through any regard for himself; and that if he persisted in these violent attempts at commonplace love-making, he should frighten his bird beyond recall; he wisely determined to change his tactics, and to win his way to her regard through her intellect, before laying siege to the fortress of her heart.

Mr Duplessis, while admitting the full difficulties of the task before him, never allowed himself to despair. His experience of the sex had unconsciously led him to form such a good opinion of his own qualifications, that he was not troubled with any doubts as to his ultimate success in the present instance. He was acute enough to perceive, what no one else suspected, that the shadow of some old love still lingered in the heart of Frederica; but he wisely kept his knowledge to himself, trusting to time and his own efforts to pull down the image of his unknown rival, and set up that of Henri Duplessis in its place. From the day on which he decided to change his mode of action, he no longer sought for opportunities of finding Frederica alone; and when Lady Spencelaugh once or twice attempted, good-naturedly, to make such occasions for him, he shrank from accepting them, and seemed unaccountably to have become as shy and retiring as his lady-love herself.

When, on the other hand, Miss Spencelaugh and he met in the presence of others, and better still, if there were only a third person present, and especially if that third person were Miss Craxton—ex-governess at Belair; middle-aged, snuffy, but still delightfully sentimental, and at present on a visit to her old pupil—then would Mr Duplessis exert himself to the utmost to dazzle and fascinate Frederica.

Although the richest young lady in all Monks-shire, Miss Spencelaugh had seen but little of London society, for the baronet and his wife had lost, years ago, all relish for town-life; and what little company visited at Belair was not of a kind to possess much interest for Frederica, chiefly consisting, as it did, of middle-aged country squires and their wives, with perhaps an insipid daughter or two, just emancipated from the boarding-school. Young

gentlemen, wanting neither in manners nor education, were not more scarce in Monks-shire than anywhere else; but after one or two of them had tried their fortune with the heiress of Belair, and had been repulsed; and when a rumour ran through the bachelor ranks that Miss Spencelaugh had bound herself by an oath never to marry, they fought rather shy of the solemn dinner-parties at the Hall, and carried themselves and their attractions to quarters where they were more likely to be appreciated. But, indeed, had any of the robust young squires of Monks-shire—university-men many of them, with their honest homely country training overlaid with a thin lacker of London fast life—been foolish enough to enter into the lists with Mr Duplessis, they would soon have had cause to regret their temerity in so doing; for Mr Duplessis had a hundred advantages on his side, such as no young man of twenty, however accomplished he might be, could hope to rival. In the first place, there was his age; and a man's age, up to a certain point, if properly managed, is an advantage rather than the contrary in a love-chase, especially if the Diana of whom he is in pursuit has to be won through the intellect as much as through the heart. Then, again, Mr Duplessis had the advantage of a wide experience of the world. He had travelled much, and had seen life in various forms; he was an excellent linguist, and had supplemented an originally good education by sundry accomplishments picked up in different countries; and he knew how to present his knowledge in its most attractive guise before others. To all this, add the fact, that he was eminently handsome, and that his style was pronounced to be irreproachable, and it will at once be seen that Mr Duplessis was not without reason on his side when he expressed his firm belief in the ultimate success of his suit.

That the Canadian was possessed of many attractive qualities, Frederica had been made aware from the day on which the Belair party had made his acquaintance so opportunely among the Pyrenees; and as time wore on, the friendly bond between the two assumed that easy, bantering, thrust-and-parry character which seems to be educed so naturally from the collision of two bright and well-polished intellects; which is essentially of the world, worldly; which rarely or never touches any of the deeper chords of feeling, nor desires, indeed, to do so; which is very ephemeral, and easily broken, but very pleasant while it lasts; and is, in fact, such a gay and sparkling apology for genuine friendship that many easy-hearted individuals prefer it to the real article, as less troublesome, and by no means so exacting. So long, then, as the friendship between them—if friendship it could be called—moved pleasantly along to light music, so long did Miss Spencelaugh take pleasure in the company of the accomplished Canadian; but at the first whisper of love, the sunlight of laughter died out of her eyes; she turned on him in all her dark and haughty beauty, and shuddered as though a serpent had stung her.

It was not merely that Frederica's heart was already given to another; there was something beyond that—one of those nameless unaccountable antipathies, which caused her whole nature to rise in revolt against the idea of ever becoming the wife of Henri Duplessis. And yet, in the face of this antagonistic feeling, she had given that rash promise to her uncle! She had given it during

the first sharp pain of her bereavement, while utterly indifferent as to whatever might happen to herself: how bitterly she regretted it afterwards, no one but herself ever knew. But when Frederica perceived that all lover-like advances on the Canadian's part had entirely ceased; that he no longer sought for an opportunity of finding her alone; and that his demeanour in no wise differed from that of any other gentleman who visited at Belair, she concluded, not unnaturally, that seeing how distasteful his suit was to her, he had silently abandoned it; and grateful to him for his forbearance, she began slowly, and almost unconsciously, to unbend towards him; and by degrees the intimacy between them came to assume its old easy laughing character, which was precisely the point to which Mr Duplessis was desirous of bringing it, and from which he began to work afresh.

It was the old easy intimacy with a difference, as Frederica was not long in discovering; less bantering and satirical than of yore, but with more of the earnest feeling of real friendship, at least on the part of Mr Duplessis; and based on a pleasant communion of intellectual tastes hitherto unsuspected by Frederica. It was strange to discover that Mr Duplessis's favourite authors were hers also. His acquaintance with Dante, and Goethe, and Schiller, exceeded her own; and in English literature, he was certainly much better read than she was. Then there were other happy points of contact between them. Mr Duplessis, like Frederica, was passionately fond of sketching from nature, and wielded a free bold pencil, which seemed to rub in, with a few easy rapid touches, effects which only by much slow, painstaking study could she adequately shadow forth. What more natural, under these circumstances, than that they should occasionally find themselves among the beautiful Belair woods, sketching some picturesque nook together, with obliging little Miss Craxton to play propriety between them. Then, again, Mr Duplessis was an admirable amateur-musician, and had a clear ringing tenor voice, which he knew how to use with excellent effect; and music, in such a case, is full of dangerous fascinations, and has tones of hidden tenderness all its own, which can reach the heart that no other language avails to touch.

The health of Sir Philip Spencelaugh waned slowly as the summer advanced, but he still clung as tenaciously as ever to his pet scheme of a union between the man for whom he had contracted so singular a liking, and Frederica. He saw, with a sort of querulous satisfaction, that Frederica no longer displayed any signs of distaste for the company of Mr Duplessis; and he was only dissuaded from urging his niece to name an early day for the marriage by the Canadian himself, who knew well that the baronet's persuasions would have an effect precisely the opposite of that which it was intended they should have, and would utterly freeze those pretty tender buds of liking which he saw creeping forth from day to day, and which he hoped, by patient and judicious cultivation, would one day culminate in the perfect flower of love. So the baronet, with some difficulty, was induced to keep his own counsel, and that of Mr Duplessis, as far as it was known to him. He would sit for an hour at a time with Frederica's hand in his, patting it softly, and murmuring below his breath: 'Good girl, good girl,' and gazing with anxious eyes into that bright proud young face, which,

when in his presence, always softened into a tenderness such as was rarely seen upon it at any other time.

Beyond the precincts of Belair, the news, unfounded as we know, spread quickly, emanating from what source no one could tell, that Miss Spencelaugh was positively engaged to Mr Henri Duplessis, and that the marriage was to take place before Christmas—spread to Normanford and Eastringham; and thence, in an ever-widening circle, from one country-house to another, till it was known throughout the length and breadth of Monkshire; and so, after a time, it travelled up to town, and came to be discussed in west-end drawing-rooms, and to be a topic for brief comment at chance meetings in the crush on aristocratic staircases.

Such was the position of affairs at Belair, at the time when one of the most important characters in our history makes his first appearance on the scene.

BEEHIVES.

If we investigate the laws that govern the power which we term instinct, we shall cease to wonder at any amount of apparent wisdom displayed by the inferior and smaller animals. To attribute, as some do, geometrical ideas to spiders and bees, is to mistake altogether the nature of instinct, in developing which the animal is as little conscious of the beauty and regularity of the effects he is producing as the rose-tree is of the form, structure, and fragrance of the flowers with which it annually adorns the summer. Nothing in the labours of the bee is more indicative of the sense of harmony, proportion, exquisite mixture of colours, and delicacy of scent, than the work of the palm-tree, the banana, or the apple-tree. In both, it is nature that energises through the animal or vegetable structure; and while we gaze at the creations of the Great Soul, we amuse ourselves by attributing the wonders we behold to the instruments made use of in their fabrication. No doubt, were we to push this doctrine to its utmost limits, other creatures besides the bee and the spider might lose much of the credit they now enjoy. Looking at the bee in his popular character, we may inquire when he first began to enter and occupy the prisons fabricated for him by the master of the animal world, whose language in nearly all countries has been enriched and made mellifluous by references to this active insect and his dwelling. With advances in this branch of natural history, men have been generally careful to unite advances in error; for example, we are told that the bee is a delicate little creature, intolerant of malaria, and everything approximating to it; yet who has forgotten a striking fact in proof of the contrary, which we find in one of the oldest records in the world? A man of great muscular strength, with no mean pretensions to wit, goes down into the country of his enemies, where he marries a wife, and makes merry with his treacherous relatives. In accordance with the taste of the day, they challenge each other to a trial of mental resources. The giant propounds a riddle, which, with the backing of a wager, he defies his new acquaintances to solve: 'Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness.' The event took place before the master of the world had thought proper to accommodate the bee with comfortable

quarters, in palaces of straw, or willow-twigs, or the bark of trees, or *lapis specularis*, or glass. Having none of these lordly retreats in which to store up his provisions for the winter, Master Bee, to prove the bluntness of his sense of smelling, took up his residence in the unsavoury carcass of a lion, which the colossal riddle-pounder had slain on his way to his foreign courtship. Other circumstances of more modern date may be adduced to prove that the bee has no superstitious terrors, or aversion for bad smells. A baby died, was put into its coffin, and deposited in a vault. The words, 'Ashes to ashes, dust to dust,' had been incorrectly pronounced over its little body, which was not committed to the dust, or sprinkled with earth or ashes. On the contrary, it was placed on a shelf, like a little Egyptian mummy, and there left to all those thousand accidents which human flesh, whether before or after death, is heir to. Through some unexplained agency, a hole was drilled in the little coffin, and some of those mortuary wretches who haunt the precincts of grave or tomb, being somewhat addicted to observation, noticed that whole regiments of bees entered one after another into the last resting-place of the baby. At length, stimulated by curiosity, these philosophers raised the coffin lid, and discovered in the breast of the diminutive skeleton a complete hive of sweets, with the queen and her subjects humming and singing as cheerily as in some ancestral oak, dripping with honey dew, and fanned by the freshest breezes of the morning. Another swarm located itself in a horse's head, another in the belly of a dead ass, and another—oh, tell it not in Gath!—in the vault of a common sewer! Let us hear no more, therefore, of the taste and delicacy of Master Bee, who obviously, when pressed for lodgings, will pitch his tabernacle anywhere.

In spite of the facts alluded to above, the bee delights in all kinds of perfumes; and one of the means of coaxing a stray swarm into a hive is to rub the inside of it with balm, and suspend it within range of their olfactory nerves. The tabernacle thus scented may be of various shapes, according to the taste and science of the country in which it is fabricated. Looking at the general history of the world, we may safely affirm, that all great improvements in hive-making are of very recent date. Bacon observes that the science of architecture preceded that of gardening, which he therefore regards as the concomitant of a considerable advance in civilisation. The remark is as just as the practice which gave rise to it is rational, since it obviously behoves men to provide for themselves a shelter from the weather, before they think of adorning and beautifying it; and a garden is in many respects merely the ornament of a dwelling, though it may be, and is often, converted into a useful appendage. Homer, who had seen many palaces and handsome houses during his travels about the basin of the Mediterranean, found the bee to be still a houseless wanderer, depositing his sweets in the cavity of a rock, or in the hollow of some ancient and aristocratic tree. In Scio, Tenedos, or among the beautiful hills about Smyrna, clothed with wild-thyme, arbutus, and oleander, he often, while inventing his *Iliad*, observed the bees pouring forth from their secluded habitations, and settling in myriads on the flower-sprinkled meadows in spring; and one of the sweetest passages in his

poem is that in which he compares the warriors before Troy, and the sound of their tramp and voices, to the diminutive honey-makers of Asia Minor, whose multitudinous hum may be often heard along the windings of the Meander or Cayster. Had hives existed in his day, this most observant of poets would, without doubt, have mentioned the fact. In the course of less than a hundred years from his time, the ingenious country gentlemen of Hellas had formed alliances with the bee, domesticated him, and persuaded or compelled his residence in the vicinity of their own dwellings.

Here, in the north, we have scarcely made the most of the advantages to be derived from cultivating the friendship of the bee, partly, perhaps, through defects incident to our climate, but partly also through lack of enterprise. We boast of our flowers, and with reason, if appearance only be considered; but in the matter of fragrance, no one who has stood at daybreak in a rose-garden in Egypt or Syria, will for a moment think of comparing the produce of our most highly cultivated grounds with the intoxicating flowers that drink the sun's rays near the tropics. There, accordingly, beehives may be multiplied with much greater chances of success than in our colder latitudes. The calculation, I believe, has never been made of how many bees can be sustained on a square acre of flowers; but I fancy that in the Fayoum, or in the neighbourhood of Damascus, or about Antioch or Aleppo, twenty hives might find sustenance where one could scarcely live in England. A gentleman who possessed an apiary at Hampstead, and was a curious observer of his subjects, frequently noticed large detachments of them working in the fields far away in Kent or Surrey. But bees, like men, take time to travel, and have no trains by which to shorten distances. It is accordingly obvious that their hives must have been filled more slowly than if they had found an adequate supply of flowers nearer home. But how did the owner, it may be asked, know his flock? He used to amuse himself by standing near the hive early in the morning; and as the squadrons mustered on the esplanade extending along their barracks, before dividing and marshalling themselves into columns, he dropped a little flour, moistened with some glutinous substance, upon their backs, which enabled him to distinguish his friends wherever he saw them. The same thing was done in Attica, only that there the bee-keepers used powdered vermilion instead of flour.

Among the rustics of France and England, bees are accommodated with very poor habitations, which are generally made with rushes or straw, and furnished with only one entrance. It is no doubt true that, bad as they are, they are generally much drier, warmer, and more comfortable than the cottages of their owners. Still, owing to the defective nature of their structure, the air at certain seasons of the year becomes humid, or too much heated or impregnated with miasmata, which generate a pestilence among the inhabitants, and carry them off by thousands. Then you may behold a melancholy spectacle in the territory of the Hivites. Day and night, laying aside all thoughts of ordinary labour, they are absorbed by the duty of bearing out their dead companions, though, like the wild elephants commemorated in the *Arabian Nights*, they provide no place of sepulture for the departed, but only tilt the bodies over the precipice in front of the hive, and trust to the winds, the mice, the

rats, or the hedgehogs, to clear the ground of their remains. In old Greece, bee-fanciers invented a beautiful hive, framed with thin panes of the *lapis specularis*, nearly as transparent as glass. Through this they studied the habits and economy of the bee, and were thus in a position to write its natural history with more or less accuracy. What are called glass hives among us consist, in truth, of the most part of wood, with glass windows here and there, placed so as to command the grand entrance through which the columns retire when leaving their cells, or march in on returning from their expeditions. I have often sat up all night to watch their manœuvres by the light of a lamp suspended over a glass opening in the top. On very fine nights in June, the industrious insects seemed never to lose a moment in sleep, but were constantly in double columns marching out or in, and it is a fact that they always kept their neighbours on the sword-hand, reversing the fashion which prevailed in London when men wore weapons. Nothing can be imagined more delicate than the fragrance wafted along in the night by the returning bees, which probably suggested to the Greek poets the idea that you could always know when a goddess was approaching by the odoriferous air that preceded her.

In the eighteenth century, hives of very ingenious construction were invented by Wildman, but they proved of no advantage to the ordinary cultivator, on account of their costliness. It is much the same with nearly all the inventions of our own day, which practically are little better than toys for the amusement of the wealthy, for their expensiveness places them beyond the reach of the poor. If cheap hives could be made with two stories, divided by a sliding roof, the bees might be admitted into the upper story by removing the slide as soon as they had filled the lower. This, I am aware, is done in costly new inventions; but what is wanted is such a hive obtainable at a low price, which may place it within reach of the humbler classes. In the Grecian islands, they make use of a habitation for the bees which has been pronounced by many the worst in the world, since it is made of earthenware, which in summer becomes so extremely heated that it almost roasts the insects in their cells. If, however, by any contrivance it could be kept cool, it would be found at once cheap and convenient, since no substance would lend itself more readily to the extension of accommodation for the labourers, who, by simple luting, could be provided with a second and a third story at very little expense. In the forests of Asia, bees erect their own dwellings, or rather find them ready erected by nature, in every hollow cane or tree; and as these are numerous, the quantity of honey and wax there found in the woods is prodigious. In proportion, however, to the extension of culture, the provender of the bee becomes diminished, and unless care be taken to plant flowers expressly for its use, in winter, it will be found needful to supply him with food in considerable quantities. In England and in France, when honey runs short in the hive, moist sugar is introduced in a split cane. In Italy, it has been recently found that oil-cake, made with rape-seed, suits the bee quite as well. Signor Masso discovered this fact by accident. Having a quantity of this material in sacks near his hives, he found that the bees pierced holes through the canvas, and bit by bit carried away nearly all his cakes. He then took a quantity of

the substance, and placed it near the hives on plates, which were very soon cleared of their contents, and in this way he fed his dependents till the flowers appeared in spring. As this contingency may always be foreseen, it should be kept in view in the construction of hives, which ought to have a portion of their interior set apart for the reception of food.

In some islands of the West Indies, flowers are so abundant, and so prolific of mellificent material, that the natives gather four honey-harvests in the year. There, however, as in many other parts of the world, they have recourse to the barbarous practice of destroying the insects in order to obtain the produce of their industry. It would be easy to invent a method which would enable bee-keepers to dislodge the bees from their habitations without sacrificing the lives of any of the inmates; this might be done by placing new hives at a short distance from the old ones, and then introducing a pipe into the latter, by means of which they might easily be smoked out. This, in a rude way, is done in many countries; but the fumes of the brimstone generally employed on such occasions, deteriorate both wax and honey. The Abbé della Rocca, a great authority on these matters, objects strongly to straw hives, and seems likewise to disapprove of the circular form, terminating in a dome. But square edifices, though more easily constructed, are less convenient—at least the bees appear to adapt themselves better to the dome or cupola. A Swiss gentleman has devised a curious method of aiding the bees in their labours: 'narrow sheets of wax are imprinted by machinery so as exactly to represent the dividing-wall of crust between the cells. These strips are attached to the top of the empty hive before the new swarm is put in, thus enabling the bees to go immediately to work, and also guiding them in making the sheets of comb in the proper direction.'

Returning to the form of hives: people are beginning, through attention to analogy, to prefer the hexagonal shape, which is that of the cells in the comb. But the price of such hives must always be an objection on the part of the poor, especially if it be needed to use the wood of the soft American pine, an inch thick. To enable cottagers to have an apiary, the plan proposed by Della Rocca is preferable to any other that I have seen; he advises that the walls of cottages, in the face next the fields, should be built with niches, to hold twelve, twenty-four, or thirty-six hives, arranged in one, two, or three stages of twelve in each. To protect the earthenware hive from cold in winter, and heat in summer, he recommends that a thick layer of hay should be placed above and below the hive, while a stone coping projecting in front would throw off the rain. In the island of Syra, where the management of bees is much attended to, almost every house—at least in the country—has an apiary. It is constructed in a peculiar manner, consisting of a thick wall, with a double row of niches, over which a third and a fourth row might be made, but for the fact that the island is exposed to strong winds, which might blow the labourers out of their dwelling, if located on a too great elevation. In ancient Greece, the practice was not to exceed three rows; but where reference was not made to the winds, the plan must have originated in superstition. Such an apiary as is found in Syra, where it is built with common stones entirely without mortar, except in the niches, any ingenious

rustic might construct in his garden without expense, and the produce of his honey-harvest would not only pay his rent, but in many cases support both him and his family. The Bee-master, whose letters appeared some time ago in the *Times*, says he could easily realise fifty pounds a year from his hives; and it is a fact that many persons have realised a great deal more. Two soldiers in Greece having been left by their father a piece of ground so small that nothing could be made of it by any ordinary processes of culture, converted it into a home for bees, planted the whole with flowers, surrounded it with a wall, which they built with their own hands, and then purchasing a few hives, began a course of industry by which they afterwards made handsome fortunes.

It appears to be commonly thought that it is immaterial what sorts of flowers are provided for the use of the bee; but this is certainly an error: the potato-flower, the gooseberry blossom, the common poppy, which have been enumerated, yield an insipid honey worth comparatively little. Again, in the island of Corsica and in the countries north-east of Trebizonde, honey is produced which is so bitter and unwholesome as in many cases to cause temporary madness. Some have thought that in Corsica the bitter savour is derived from the box-tree; while in the region of the Kurds, it is the flower of the rhododendron that imparts the nauseous and noxious qualities to the honey. If in these cases the chemistry of the bee fails to assimilate the juices in question to the proper purpose of honey-making, it may be inferred that it would equally fail to impart a rich scent and flavour to the juices derived from the coarse blossoms of the kitchen-garden. The Sicilian honey, so famous in old times, derived its exquisite flavour, scent, and colour from those large tracts of wild-thyme which perfumed the whole atmosphere in many parts of the island. But even the manufacture of the Hyblean bee yielded in fragrance, colour, and sweetness to the honey of Attica, which was admitted to be the most delicate and delicious in the world. The reason is not difficult to be discovered: the whole territories of the republic from Sunium to Cithæron consisted of a soft succession of hill and dale, covered with a light sweet earth, which infused, and still infuses, extraordinary fragrance and delicacy to all the flowers there growing, especially to the blossoms of the wild-thyme, which send up a cloud of sweetness as you tread upon them. In the hills above Lausanne, you find considerable patches of the same description, sometimes completely netting small mounds, at other times extending from eminence to eminence, where you may amuse yourself for hours by watching the manoeuvres of the Attic insect as it toils beneath your feet, singing all the while to lighten its labours. I have already observed that the bee sometimes works all night, but as it would be impossible for it to persevere in such a course, it occasionally takes a nap in the bells of flowers, where, if particularly weary, it nestles all night; and one of its favourite resting-places is the hollow of the scented geranium, or the spotted cranesbill. Among the fifty-five species of bees enumerated by Linnaeus, some kinds display a preference for one sort of dwelling, others for one totally different: the moss-building bee constructs its dwelling, as its name imports, of delicate mosses found on the tops of hills; the stone-loving bee prefers the crevices

of rocks: the violet bee bores a hole in hollow trees, and deposits its sweets at the bottom of the cavity; while there is one species which suspends its pensile habitation to the boughs of the cotton-tree. The peasants in Russia, taking a hint perhaps from this insect, make small wooden hives, which they set up in the lofty branches of the pine-tree, as the traveller may observe in nearly all the extensive woods between St Petersburg and Moscow.

If the management of bees were made to enter into the education of the humbler classes in all parts of the world, there would be much less poverty and much less crime for the laws to deal with. At present, not a thousandth part of the benefit which might be derived from this diminutive coadjutor of man is taken advantage of. In this country, and perhaps throughout Europe, the adulteration of honey forms a separate branch of industry, so that it is scarcely possible to obtain it pure except when bought fresh in the country. It is then almost as clear as dew, transparent, fragrant, glistening, and nutritive beyond most other substances. When allowed to settle and harden without adulteration, it granulates into a sort of beautiful paste, of a light golden colour, which is exchanged for a whitish disagreeable hue, by the admixture of flour and other substances. The wax, also, when pure, is of a golden colour, yet considerably darker than the honey, and when old and mixed with extraneous matters, it often looks nearly black. It is easy to understand what increase of employment would be afforded by carefully attending to these insects, making hives, building apiaries, planting flowers, attending to the wants of the insects, collecting and storing the honey, melting the wax, conveying it to seaports, shipping it from one country to another, and numerous other processes very easy to conceive. Some of these forms of industry would not be unsuitable to women, who might thus find occupation far from towns, where they might cultivate healthy tastes and provide with facility for their own subsistence.

AS GOOD AS A WHITE MAN—AND BETTER TOO.

ABOUT the end of last century, I was called out of Inverness-shire to attend a meeting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh; and having been but newly placed over my charge, my circumstances were but as yet so limited that, upon making the necessary preparations for the journey to Edinburgh, I could muster no more than one poor solitary half-crown in cash to meet my travelling-expenses—a sum totally inadequate to pay any, or but a small part of any means of conveyance. The call being hurried, I had no time to write any of my brethren for the needful funds, and not caring to ask this from any of my parishioners, but expecting that, when come to Edinburgh, I would get such assistance as I required from some of my brethren, or some friend whom I knew, I resolved to set out on foot, husbanding my precious half-crown in such a way as would afford me the necessary victuals, without having recourse to begging during the journey. Having received the letter of convention in the afternoon, I resolved to start next

morning, there being only five days before the meeting of the Assembly. In the dim dawn, accordingly, I was on my way; and after pushing on for an hour or two, and entering the high-road from Inverness to the south, I descried, some distance ahead of me, a man on horseback leading in his hand another horse. Having come up with the rider, who was going forward at an easy pace, I began to be afraid, and trembled when I saw that the man was quite black. You must remember I was a young man and a Highlander; and though I had heard of the black men of the Indies, yet, considering the unseasonable hour, and, as I had never heard of any black man having been ever seen in that neighbourhood before except the devil, who was believed to assume that appearance, I was not without some doubts of this strange apparition, and for some time I narrowly watched the man and his movements. Having ventured to accost him, I perceived he was eager for conversation, which was carried on while I kept cautiously towards the other side of the road. At length, having told him I was going to Edinburgh, the black man replied that he was bound thitherward also, and offered me the horse which he led. This, as my misgivings regarding the personality of the black horseman had begun to give way, I was glad to accept, inwardly thanking Providence for having thus favoured me with such good-fortune.

It turned out that the Black was the servant or slave of a rich Jamaica planter, who was at that time home on a visit to his Highland friends, and that the spare horse was for the master, who had gone forward a day in advance of the horseman, to enjoy a walk through the Highlands. My good-fortune was not then quite so great as I had at first calculated, but yet I was very glad. The day was spent very pleasantly, the black man raising my astonishment by conversing freely in Gaelic, which, it appeared, was well known in the West Indies; while I myself, taking advantage of the occasion, and finding the man was as willing to learn as he was also ignorant of religion, spent the most of the day's journey in unfolding to him the truths of the divine record, until I came to regard my new friend, whom, from his wild and swarthy looks, I at first looked upon with dread and abhorrence, with a brotherly affection, founded not only on our common relationship to the first, but also to the second Adam.

When the night was coming down, and we had entered the bleak hill-country, we left the main road, and struck up through the hills, expecting to find some human habitation, where, for the sake of the horses, we might spend the night; but after pursuing our errand for some time without anything appearing to meet our desire, and our route having become very fatiguing and dangerous, the ground being everywhere broken and puddled, and often covered by the thick and intergrowing heather, we came to a halt, and having no other resort, set about making preparations for spending the night in the open air. Willing to make one more effort for the sake of the beasts, I proposed

ascending to the top of a high hill that appeared to the southward, and leaving the black with the horses, I reached the summit of the hill in about half an hour, and was delighted to catch in my eye the distant glimmering of the light of a habitation; and after having marked the position of the light, I at once retraced my steps down the hill. We now remounted; and after a little more fatigue, and a few escapades, arising as much from our ignorance of the ground as from its real difficulty, we arrived at the place to which the light directed us. This turned out to be a *bohanári*, or shepherd's shieling, rather larger than the ordinary dimensions, and looking by no means uncomfortable; and having secured and provided for the horses for the night in an enclosure at the back of the shieling, we entered the *bohanári*, where we found a blazing fire, but no human being. However, as we were now in need thereof, we set about preparing our evening meal, trusting to the well-known hospitality of the shepherds, that the liberty we were taking would not be taken amiss. After our repast, being greatly fatigued, we grew heavy, and inclined to go to sleep, and observing a bed obscured by some drapery in the further corner of the hut, we set about examining it; and finding it quite comfortable, we both stripped us of our clothes, drew everything inside the curtains, and lay down to sleep.

We had fallen asleep but shortly, when we were awakened by a loud and confused noise outside the hut, which we soon recognised to be the voices of a number of men. Stamping and swearing, they rushed in, seized hold of a small table at the foot of the bed, and placing it in the middle of the floor, they began emptying out great sums of money upon it, which, or the parting thereof, appeared to form the matter of their dispute. As it now sufficiently appeared to me and my friend that these ruffians were no other than highway robbers, and that it was in their or their chief's bed we were now lying, we were driven to the extremity of despair, not knowing what to do. As soon as discovered, we could expect nothing at the hands of these bloody and lawless men but certain death, in one form or another; if we dared move, we were discovered; and if we remained as we were, there was hardly a chance that we should eventually escape observation. Being almost afraid to breathe, and nearly stupified with the squabbling and swearing of the ruffians, I at length, in the courage of despair, whispered in the ear of the black man these words: 'My dear friend, God is always good, and helps us in our time of need; have faith, and do this: Seeing that God has given you a skin differing so much from the people of this country, you will seize my stick, and rise up naked in your black skin the first time they mention the name of the devil, and rushing up to them, cry out: What, in my name, is that you do?'—Then, waiting his opportunity, which was not long in coming, the black man, springing from the folds of the curtain, and rolling up his eyes, and shewing his great jaws, roared out in Gaelic the words I gave him. This lucky idea brought the desired result. The black no sooner appeared in his Satanic character, than the villains scampered away like so many scared sheep.

After a fervent 'Praise be to God!' we began dressing as quickly as possible for our departure; 'for,' said I, 'though we are perhaps safer here now than we can be anywhere else, the villains being

so superstitious that they will not venture within some miles of the place before daylight, yet, with the first break of day, they will be sure to return to see after their money; and if then found in the neighbourhood, we shall fare ill indeed.' We next gathered up and secured the money, for the purpose of having it restored to those who might claim it. Much of it was paper, and it amounted to a great sum; and I wondered how such an amount of money could have come within reach of robbers in that part of the country. We equipped ourselves, moreover, with two of the lanterns which the robbers had left behind in their fright, and having got out the horses, we were ready to start. The black then proposed to burn the hut, and, suiting the action to the word, he thrust a burning peat into the wall, and flared a wisp of burning straw over the roof; and we soon had a blaze which, the black said, would let us see how to set out on our way, as it had guided us off it. The night was very dark, there being no moon, and the sky overcast with clouds, and we had no sign to guide us but the wind on our cheek. We were not, indeed, without apprehensions that we might fall in with some one of the scared bandits, but the black said he was prepared to meet them all again. We continued our nocturnal march for many hours, without sight or sound of anything to realise our apprehensions, and held, as well as we could reckon, due south, until we got into a more open part of the country. We then expected that we should soon either reach the high-road or some human habitation, and were beginning to assure ourselves that we had now got clear of the enemy, when both our horses gave a loud snort, pulled back, and snuffing the air, were eager to plunge away in a new direction.

We stopped, and called for any one to answer us. Then receiving no reply, we dismounted, resolved to know what was before us; and the black saying he was the fittest man to meet anybody, took his lantern, and went to search. He had not far to go when he stumbled on a white figure lying on the ground, and bringing his lantern over it, he saw it was a man stripped of everything but his underclothing; and laying his hand upon the body, he found the man was dead, and looking at his face, he saw it was his master. The black then raised a howl of anguish, and threw himself on his knees, and began beating his breast and crying and sobbing as if his heart was struggling to burst; and it was long before I could draw his attention to hear that I was speaking, and to answer my questions, put for the hundredth time. At last the matter was explained; and the black coming to guard the frightened horses, I went to look at the body, and making a minute examination, stupified the poor black by crying out that I believed his master was not dead. The poor slave so far forgot himself that he let the horses go, and ran up to his master to be assured that he was not really dead. 'If we only had brandy or whisky,' said I, 'I think he would revive.' Then the black, saying he had brandy at his saddles, ran away again in pursuit of the horses, calling himself by no flattering names for his stupidity in letting the horses go, and almost immediately came upon the high-road, from which it appeared we had been but a little way off when we stopped. He then listened, and catching a sound of the horses' hoofs, he bounded off in the

direction indicated, and soon found the poor animals, which were too fatigued to run far, lazily moving along and biting the grass at the roadside. He was soon back again to my assistance; and leaving the horses on the road, with their bridles tied together, he came with a flask of brandy. I had by this time ascertained, by the aid of my lantern, that the black's master had received a severe blow on the head, and a knife-wound in the neck, which appeared to have bled profusely, but that he was still alive, though unconscious. We lost no time in administering the brandy; and before half an hour, we had the satisfaction of seeing the wounded man so far recovered as to be able to speak. We then dressed and bound his wounds, and divesting ourselves of part of our own garments, clothed him, and laid him upon the heather. Here we remained until day began to dawn, when the wounded man appearing so far restored as to be able to bear lifting, we placed him on one of the horses; and the black man walking by his side supporting him, we journeyed slowly onward until near the middle of the day, when we came in sight of a farmhouse, towards which we at once made, and were most hospitably received. Our sad plight was sorely bewailed; the wounded man was put in a comfortable bed, and had all the care and kindness shewn him that could be given in the circumstances, while I was myself also induced to rest where I was for the day.

The poor gentleman told his story as follows: 'He had loitered longer on the way than he had at first intended, and having arrived about midnight, the first night, at a public-house some twenty miles north of the place where we then were, he spent the night there, and also part of the next day, amusing himself by getting the stories and information of the place. He loitered on the road the second day as he did on the first, so that he did not reach the place where he was found till some hours after dark, though he calculated to have reached that distance by sunset, and the next public-house two or three hours after. On reaching the place alluded to, he was surprised by a number of men springing upon him from the roadside, and demanding his purse or his life. He happened, and, as it turned out, very foolishly, to have a large quantity of money upon him; and not wishing to risk the loss of such a sum in this way, he first remonstrated with the men on the wickedness of their designs, and then offered them five pounds apiece. This appeared to satisfy them, and he was then allowed to pass on. He had not gone very far, however, when apparently, after a second consultation, the men were after him again, and coming up to him, they said they wished to know his name, and immediately he felt a blow on his head, and he remembered no more.' After thus hearing the wounded man's narration, I produced the money found in the bohanári, and rehearsed our own story, and was delighted in thus being guided by Providence to restore the lost property to its rightful owner.

Next morning, I started for the south upon the planter's steed, and attended by one of the farm-servants, to bring the horses back. The black remained to attend to his master, who, having some knowledge of surgery, was able to prescribe for himself until his further recovery should enable him to proceed on his journey. On my way back from Edinburgh, after the meeting of the Assembly, I called at the farmhouse to inquire for my friends,

but found they had gone a few days before. There was, however, a letter left for me, and a packet, which, on being opened, was found to contain all the money that the black and I had recovered from the robbers.

FIELD-MARSHAL VISCOUNT COMBERMERE.

WHEN a very long life closes—a life which has been successful, honoured, and renowned—it is natural that the imagination should please itself in sketching its probable experience, in tracing its vicissitudes, as the biographer records them, and especially in surveying the historical field through which the journey, which has come to an end, has lain. A human life which endured for ninety-two years—nearly a century in the most wonderful period of the history of mankind—a life which had its duties in high command, in war and in council, its place, elevated in the eyes of men—a representative life, with vast opportunities of action and knowledge—is a subject for thought, speculation, and association, from which only the shallow and careless can turn away uninterested and unimpressed. Such length of days is in itself alone wonderful to contemplate. To the very old man, who, like Lord Combermere,* retains his faculties in extreme age, history and politics, the cognate studies which have the most lasting and satisfying charm for the intellect, acquire vast additional interest and actuality. What other men read of, and imagine vaguely, he has seen; the things which have faded, in the rapid rush of events, systems, and discoveries, into the vagueness of tradition, are present and real to him. A retrospective gaze into his own life is as wonderful as to the young student is the sudden realising glimpse attained by intense thought, by long concentrated attention on an era, or an event of the past; but to him sight has been given; to the student, faith alone.

Only a year ago, a fine old soldier, a brave, dutiful Englishman, died at Clifton, in the full possession of his faculties; who, albeit but little given to talking of himself, a reserved man, and one from whom information had to be dexterously extracted, had seen wonderful events, and shared their danger, their glory, and their reward; who had helped to make history, and had seen, in his ninety-two years of existence, more than a couple of centuries in any preceding ages had to shew of the real vitality of human affairs, and the true progress of liberty and enlightenment. If Lord Combermere had been, individually, a less remarkable man than he was—had the actual incidents of his career been less striking and interesting than they were, it would still have claimed our interest: the story of the years which had passed over the slight, upright form, only a little while ago familiar to us all—the panorama on the banks between which that stream of life flowed on to the ocean of infinitude. The old man who died last year, full of honours, had seen Dr Johnson, and had had his growth and comeliness commented on by Mrs Thrale, a relative of the Cottons, who 'cut' her when she consulted (and secured) her own happiness by marrying Signor Piozzi. He was

at school at Westminster under Dr Dodd; Southey, Sir Robert Wilson, and Lord Henry Petty, known to our time as the Marquis of Lansdowne, were his contemporaries; Charles Bunbury, and Charles Wynn, afterwards Speaker of the House of Commons, were his chosen friends. Nothing makes us better realise the distance from the present of Stapleton Cotton's boyhood than the account of his father and family removing from their house in Berkeley Square to Combermere Abbey, in Cheshire, when the ladies travelled in a huge coach, drawn by four grays, which Sir Robert drove, the sons followed on horseback, and the cavalcade was three days on the road.

In 1790, Stapleton Cotton got his commission, and proceeded to Ireland, to join the 23d Regiment, or Welsh Fusiliers. His relatives were terribly frightened when they learned his destination. English people in those days had notions of Ireland and Irish society about as correct as those now entertained by ordinary French people, who have heard of an island of that name, are not certain whereabouts it is, but believe the inhabitants to be almost savage; and the reputation of the regiment was as bad as that of the locality. Everybody drank hard in those days, and the army drank harder, especially in Ireland and Flanders. 'Little Cotton,' as Colonel Ormsby (an individual whom the taste of the age called jocular and jovial, but whom we should simply designate as a drunken, ignorant brute) called him, possessed moral courage, and a fine constitution; the one enabled him to resist the contagion of the brutishness then prevalent and fashionable, the other to support the measure of excess to which he did yield, without evil results. He was frank, cordial, possessed of great animal spirits, and he had a success in Irish society. After three years, when it is to be presumed he was seasoned to soldiering, claret, whisky, and flirtation, Stapleton Cotton exchanged into the 6th Carabiniers, and was sent to Bruges. In 1794, he went into action, in 'the affair of Premont,' a forgotten incident of war, his own account of which will be read with interest. On the eve of another war in Europe, it is strange and melancholy to turn to the records of the past, to see how blood and treasure were wasted, and human misery ignored, a thing of no account, and how utterly it all failed to avail—how the old struggle is beginning over again, to reach again a semblance of cessation, and recommence age after age. The old man who shall die ninety-two years hence, having been born to-day, what story will his life have to tell, when the sum of it is made up? What sort of thing will the map of Europe be, when his biography shall be written; and what will be the cut-and-dry lessons respecting countries, their rulers, and their governments, set for the children of that generation? His family interest soon procured Stapleton Cotton's promotion, and we find him at Weymouth, a captain in 'Gwynn's Hussars,' as the 25th Light Dragoons were called, attending on George III., and dancing with the Princess Mary, before she became Duchess of Gloucester. The life of the soldier, which began with garrison in Dublin in 1790, and lasted until ten years after the Crimean war, offers a long vista; that of the courtier, which commenced with the days of the Princess Mary's girlhood, and finished with the marriage of the Princess Mary's grand-nephew, long after the worthy old duchess was dead, is not less suggestive.

* *Memoirs and Correspondence of Field-marshal Viscount Combermere, G.C.B., &c. From his Family Papers.* By the Right Hon. Mary Viscountess Combermere, and Captain Knollys. London: Hurst and Blackett.

Forty years of soldiering and governor-general business, and thirty years of gold-stick—what a quantity of trumpery and tinsel, of real power and mock dignity—what intrigues, what miseries, how much grandeur and reality, how much wearisome form and heartless pretence, how much vanity and vexation of spirit, are implied in the mere statement! This was a life passed both on the stage, in the boxes, and behind the scenes—a prosperous, successful, eventful life—not illumined by genius, remarkable because circumstances made it so; with a share of trial and affliction, but only a small share, considering the space it was spread over. One wonders whether it became very fatiguing, whether gold-stick, trembling and shivering in St George's Hall, at ninety years old, but bravely bearing the brunt of court ceremonial, as of battle in days of yore—the yore of half a century—did not consider it dreary work, and long for the endless holiday. The exceptionally great age of the field-marshal and gold-stick is always present to the mind in reading these Memoirs—present, when the 'dandy hussar' (the 'English Murat,' as he has been called, though, if his portrait be a true resemblance, he can never have been comparable in personal appearance to the plebeian royal Adonis, and famous *sabreur*) writes boyish letters, in 1797, to his mother and his aunt, from Madras, in the wonderful, then little-known empire of the East—letters the author of which was to be Commander-in-chief there thirty years later, and to live to hear the great Indian mutiny of 1857 spoken of as a thing of the past, out of sight, in fact, like the siege of Seringapatam or the taking of Bhurtpore.

At Trichinopoly, Colonel Cotton saw much of Colonel Wellesley, his senior by seven years, his unsuccessful rival in the art of dress, wherein, indeed, Colonel Cotton was supreme, being as fond of fine clothes as any woman or negro, and deriving satisfaction from his uniform and decorations to the end of his life. That the Duke of Wellington disliked Lord Combermere when they were both old men, is notorious; that he prevented his being given an earldom, and tried to prevent his being made a privy-councillor, these Memoirs tell us. The probability is that he did not much like the young colonel, so much handsomer, and more elegant, so much more popular, and so incomparably inferior himself. The story of great men's lives affords us curious glimpses of the infinitely little in feeling and principle—the present instance is no exception. The two were breakfasting together, when, after the British victory at Seringapatam, Tippee Sultan's children were brought in, and Colonel Cotton comforted the little five-year old Gholām Mahomed with sugar. Sixty years afterwards, Gholām Mahomed dined with Lord Combermere, and reminded him of the incident. India was very far off when Tippee's son was only five years old; but the madness of the French revolutionary spirit had wonderful expansion, and it reached the distant East. When the future hero of Waterloo was inaugurating his splendid career in India, the French officers in Tippee's army were declaiming at a republican club built in front of the Sahib's palace, surmounted by the cap of Liberty, and where they swore eternal hatred to all sovereigns, 'the citizen Tippee alone excepted.' Perhaps the Duke remembered this grimly when he had brought back to Paris that 'well-beloved' sovereign, who

shewed such remarkable ineptitude for anything but running away, when he had been made a king, though Monsieur had been a cunning and mischievous schemer enough as Count de Provence. When Colonel Cotton was leaving India in 1799, he bade a friend adieu with the remark that they should never meet again. 'Not until you are Commander-in-chief,' was the reply; and thirty years later, Lord Combermere shook hands with the gentleman in question in Madras, having just arrived in that identical capacity. The recurrence of such coincidences keep the old man ever in our minds; the young man eludes realisation.

In 1802, Colonel Cotton went to Ireland, accompanied by his wife, Lady Anna Maria Clinton, sister to the then Duke of Newcastle, the present duke's grandfather. He had seen the fall of Tippee Sultan, and had been distinguished first by the familiar regard, and then by the virulent and spiteful enmity of the Prince Regent. Now he saw misery, destitution, class-hatred, vain rebellion, heroic, but wasted enthusiasm and patriotism. Emmett's rebellion was the chief event of his sojourn in Ireland. Then, in 1807, came his young wife's death, and the outbreak of the Peninsular War. He was still a young man when he commanded the Light Division at Talavera, and was made lieutenant-general when he succeeded to his father's baronetcy, when the Duke of Wellington bore public, though probably reluctant, testimony to his judgment and ability; when he returned to England, received the thanks of the House of Commons, and was sent out again to the Peninsula in command of the cavalry. The history of the war until 1810 is his history—grand, terrible, and eventful. The lustre of the Duke's great name throws all others, perhaps unduly, into the shade, and the great achievements of the war were those of the infantry; but throughout it all, Sir Stapleton Cotton's gallantry, and admirable soldierly qualities, were conspicuous.

He was not a man of genius, but he was a man of action, splendidly brave, with a high and inexorable sense of duty, a quick temper, popular manners, a handsome person, dashing bearing, and a kind heart. These are generalities, after all; but he was, if not a great, at least a 'considerable' man. There is no doubt that he sustained a bitter and embittering disappointment by the appointment of Lord Uxbridge to the command of the cavalry, when Napoleon's return from Elba once more plunged England into war. He had been raised to the peerage, and invested with the decorations he prized so highly, before that time; he had married a second time, and had been *fêted*, and presented with public addresses; had had processions got up in his honour, and undergone a variety of things of the kind, which, strange to say, he liked, and continued to like till the end of his life. A simple sort of vanity and love of representation is remarkable in him always. He sat for an equestrian statue, in field-marshal's uniform, when he was ninety, hour after hour, day after day, with patient pleasure; and very likely he regarded the custom which enjoins the interment of military dignitaries of his rank in that uncompromising uniform, with satisfaction. He had rank, wealth, applause, and 'ovations' enough to satisfy a Yankee orator, or a New York mob; but he never got over his mortification at being absent from Waterloo. He could not bear the subject mentioned, so his friends avoided it, and no doubt duly criticised

the weakness which rendered such reticence necessary. He got the command when Lord Uxbridge was incapacitated by his wound, but the game was played out then, the eagle's talons were drawn, and his wings clipped, and the lonely eyrie awaited him. The army came home; the Great Captain began his career as a statesman, and Lord Combermere went out as governor to Barbadoes.

He reached the island in 1817, and left it in 1820. His governorship was not remarkable; he had quarrels with the council, and a good deal of difficulty; but, on the whole, he did well, always doing his duty, according to his lights, which, if not brilliant, were always steady. He was far removed from the gold-stick period, even then, and yet he had seen wonderful scenes and events, and turned a great page in the world's history. In 1822, he was sent to Ireland, as Commander of the Forces, and found society there in a queer condition, but on the whole very amusing, with its pervading flavour of Lord Norbury's brutal wit, and Lady Rossmore's eccentricity. In 1825, he was selected by the East India Company for the command-in-chief in India. 'Send out Lord Combermere; he's the man to take Bhurtpore,' said the Duke of Wellington, whose confidence was perhaps strengthened by an inclination to get rid of his old companion-in-arms. 'He's not a man of genius,' objected the deputation sent to request the Duke's advice. 'I don't care a d—n about his genius,' replied his plain-speaking Grace; 'he's the man to take Bhurtpore.' So Lord Combermere went to India once more, and he did take Bhurtpore, and so turned another, and most important, page in the history of the British empire; and then he enjoyed processions, grand hunting-parties, and so forth, to his heart's content; and kept rather an interesting journal. He was popular in India, and led a delightful life there, until the last year of his stay, when the 'half-batta question' led to quarrels, which have lost all their point long ago, and never had much general interest. He returned to England in 1830; and having been appointed colonel of the First Life Guards in 1829, was made gold-stick on his arrival, by William IV. His active military career closed with his second campaign in India, the second epoch in his life; and still a long term of years lay before him, a term checkered by some domestic misfortunes, but on the whole singularly fortunate.

Lord Combermere did not possess a particle of political ability, but then he did not require to use any. He was a vote, and no more—a traditional, obstinate, bigoted Tory, a most respectable peer, and a valuable and dignified personage at prorogations by commission, openings of parliament, and all kinds of 'spectacles.' He was a devoted adherent of Sir Robert Peel until the 'shocking affair' of the corn laws, and then he was utterly horrified at the great statesman's baseness. The man and the measures contrived to survive the worthy veteran's displeasure and opposition, probably much to his surprise, for, never having been clever, Lord Combermere began, in the third era of his existence, to be stupid. In 1837, Lady Combermere, from whom he had long been separated, died; and in 1838 he married, for the third time, the lady who is his admiring biographer. A foreign tour, with plenty of *fêtes*, and much royal hospitality, belongs to the gold-stick period; and at home, peace, honour, increase of dignity, the office

of Constable of the Tower, and the rank of field-marshal. With all the political events, and all the history of royalty during the present reign, Lord Combermere was intimately associated. The French revolutions of 1830 and 1848, the Crimean War, and the events which have changed the fate of Italy, and led to the new war just beginning, developed themselves under the eyes of the man who had past his first youth before the treaties of Paris and Vienna were made. He was a living link between the past and the present in the history of England—a gallant soldier and a true gentleman. None who read these volumes will deny the need of respect to the memory of Lord Combermere.

THE RUINED CHAPEL

No abbots now in ghostly white nor sable,
No choir to rival the angelic songs,
No whispering thunder in low organ-notes,
To thrill with heavenly answers kneeling throngs.

The monks have long departed! shadows now
Fall thick upon the roofless porch and chancel;
Long since the raging king drew angry sword,
The charter of this fallen house to cancel.

No priests nor worshippers are left—ah! vainly
Faith, praying, consecrates her special places;
Time is a cruel heathen, and delights
To leave on sacred things its mouldy traces.

But 'No,' Hope says, for where of old there stood
The altar and God's shrine so loved and treasured,
Comes now the black-bird's ceaseless gladsome hymn,
Poured forth with joy and gratitude unmeasured.

And see, the Elder brings its pure white flowers,
So broad and level, lavish, and so fair,
As offerings to the shattered altar-stone,
That still, though rent and mossy, moulders there.

And still the suppliant wind, its frightened dirge
Moans ceaseless o'er the silent sheeted dead,
Or wafts its lingering hymns when winter moons
Are shining cold and brightly overhead.

These little worshippers, the wild-flowers, too,
Sown by the pitying angels, rise and bloom
(Speedwell and primrose) in among the stones,
Nod from the arch, or sway above the tomb.

Nature has pity on man's frailty,
And loves such ruins for their builder's sake,
For the old piety that's gone to dust,
And lies so calmly now beneath the brake.

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